

The
Botanical Gazette.

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December 5. 1890.

My dear Dr. Watson:--

Do not be alarmed when you see the enclosure in this letter. I am not going to ask you to revise every page of my MS, but I will trouble you to look over a little more. The package of letters as well as the three catalogues came duly to hand (and I suppose the copy of Henderson will be in on the mail that sees this go out, as I have your p.c. announcing its coming.) I have considered those letters and am of opinion that there are some suggestions that are worth carrying out, IF THEY DO NOT INVOLVE TOO GREAT A DEPARTURE FROM THE ORIGINAL PLAN OF THE BOOK. Some of them coincide closely with my own views as to desirable changes. In working out the Ranunculaceae, however, I took special pains to make as few changes as I ~~thought~~ ~~could~~ could. After pondering over the matter for some time I have made out the order Magnoliaceae after a somewhat different plan, and one that embodies most of the changes that I think desirable. Those changes are as you will see on examining the slips: 1. The making out of a key to ~~spec~~ ~~ex~~ genera to follow the description of the order, the choices of the key to have but one or at most but two characters. Wherever possible this key is to follow or rather to show the order in which the genera will be arranged. I expect that this cannot always be done, in which case the key would be more or less artificial. 2. Giving a fairly full description of the genus as in the Manual, i.e. under each generic head-

ing, instead of in the synopsis of genera. Of course the description will be more condensed than that of the Manual. 3. Using so large a number of analytic divisions that never more than two species will occur together. My experience with students is that it is very difficult for beginners to keep in mind or to select from more than two specific descriptions. This third change, you see, amounts practically almost to making a key to species.

It so happens in the case of the Magnoliaceae that the generic descriptions in the synopsis after the description of the order are very complete, so that I have had to do little more than transfer them to the other position that I propose.

When it comes to the printing I shall want to consider whether it is not desirable to indicate the cultivated, indigenous and introduced species by ~~different~~ ^{different} type; or at least the indigenous from the cultivated and introduced. But that is in the distance yet.

As soon as we get the plan of work fully settled I shall be able to make some progress. I hope that you will not take the work up to date as an indication of my personal rate. After my inertia is once overcome I shall travel I hope at a constantly accelerated velocity until I collide with the immovable F I N I S.

Very sincerely yours,

CR Barnes

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